

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 12, 14, 17-34, 36-39, and 41-43 are pending in this case. Claims 10, 11, and 13 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 12 and 14 are amended by the present amendment. Amended Claims 12 and 14 are supported by the original claims, and therefore add no new matter.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,995,802, herein "Mori") in view of Nagata et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,321,477, herein "Nagata"). Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mori in view of Nagata and further in view of Noguchi et al. (Japanese Patent Publication No. 10-260590). Claims 12 and 14 were objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise were indicated as including allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1-4, 6-8, 17-34, 36-39, and 41-43 are allowed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 1-4, 6-8, 17-34, 36-39, and 41-43 and the indication that Claims 12 and 14 include allowable subject matter.

Claims 10, 11 and 13 are cancelled, making the present rejections on the merits moot.

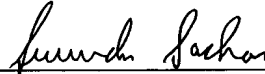
Claims 12 and 14 are amended to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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